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PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Appl. No.: 10/690,395 Confirmation No.: 3755
Applicant(s): Lodwig et al.
Filed: October 20, 2003
Art Unit: 2854
Examiner: S. Funk
Title: SUBSTRATE CLEANING APPARATUS AND METHOD

Docket No.: 047717/274909
Customer No.: 00826

Mail Stop Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

RESPONSE

Sir:

This correspondence is in response to the Office Action dated March 2, 2005. In light of the Office Action, Applicants have not amended the claims. Instead, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as currently presented are patentable over the cited references. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the application based on the following remarks.

The Office Action rejects pending Claims 46-53. The Office Action rejects Claims 46-48, 50, 52, and 53 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Japanese reference 2002-120446 to Takahashi. Claims 49 and 51 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious in light of the Takahashi reference in combination with U.S. Patent Application No. 2002/106229 to Meier et al. Applicants respectfully disagree with these rejections.

As discussed in the patent application, the present invention provides a ribbon cartridge that includes an integrated cleaning roller for cleaning media prior to printing. The cleaning roller removes debris from the media, so that the debris does not interfere with printing. As recited in the claims, the cleaning roller is unalterably linked with the consumable transfer media and consumable cleaning structure, e.g., a cassette, so that they must be installed and replaced

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together as a unit. Unalterably linking the cleaning roller with the cassette is very important. Specifically, print quality is heavily dependent on the cleanliness of the media prior to printing. As such, a printer manufacturer is very concerned with proper maintenance and replacement of the cleaning roller between uses. More importantly, as replacement of the cleaning roller is typically in the hands of the user, the printer manufacturer cannot ensure that cleaning roller has replaced in a timely manner. Thus, the printer manufacturer cannot properly ascertain whether a problem with print quality is caused by a user's failure to replace the cleaning roller.

This problem is eliminated by the claimed embodiment of the present invention. In this embodiment, the cleaning roller is "unalterably linked" to the ribbon cartridge, such that the user is forced to change the cleaning roller with the cartridge. The claimed system does not allow the user to remove the cleaning roller from the spent cartridge and place it in a new cartridge, such that the user could continue to use the old cleaning roller with a new ribbon cartridge. In this manner, the printer manufacturer can ensure that print quality is not compromised by use of a spent cleaning roller.

Applicants respectfully submit that the Takahashi reference no where teaches or suggests that the cleaning roller is unalterably linked to consumable transfer media and consumable cleaning structure, as is recited in independent Claim 46. The Takahashi reference at best merely discloses that cleaning roller is located in the ribbon cartridge so that they may be changed at the same time. The Takahashi reference no where teaches or suggests the cleaning roller either is or should be inalterably linked to the cartridge so as to prevent the user from changing the ribbon without changing the cleaning roller. Applicants note that this is also not taught or suggested by the figures of the Takahashi reference. There is no disclosure whatsoever in the Takahashi reference to teach or suggest that the cleaning roller should be unalterably linked with the cartridge to ensure that the user changes the cleaning roller with the cartridge.

In light of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claim 46, as well as the claims that depend therefrom, is patentable over the cited references. Applicants therefore respectfully request that a Notice of Allowance be issued in the application. The Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to resolve any remaining issues in order to expedite examination of the present application.

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It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,

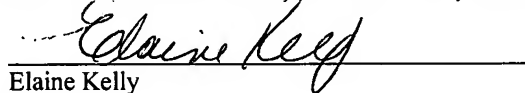


W. Kevin Ransom
Registration No. 45,031

Customer No. 00826
ALSTON & BIRD LLP
Bank of America Plaza
101 South Tryon Street, Suite 4000
Charlotte, NC 28280-4000
Tel Charlotte Office (704) 444-1000
Fax Charlotte Office (704) 444-1111

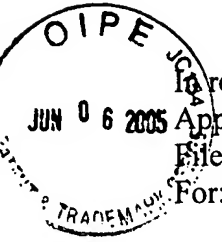
CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on June 2, 2005.


Elaine Kelly

CLT01/4714284v1

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SUPPLEMENTAL CITATION UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.97

Attached is a Supplemental Form PTO-1449 listing several documents that were first cited in the International Search Report for the corresponding International Application Number PCT/US200/000795 not more than three months prior to the filing of this Statement. In this regard, Applicant notes that the International Search Report was not received by any individual designated by 37 CFR 1.56(c) more than thirty (30) days prior to the filing of this Information Disclosure Statement. The Search Report is enclosed along with any cited foreign patent documents and non-patent literature documents in accordance with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(2).

It is requested that the Examiner consider these documents and officially make them of record in accordance with the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.97 and Section 609 of the MPEP. By identifying the listed documents, Applicant in no way makes any admission as to the prior art status of the listed documents, but is instead identifying the listed documents for the sake of full disclosure.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Kevin Ransom".

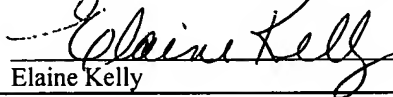
W. Kevin Ransom
Registration No. 45,031

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CUSTOMER NO. 00826
ALSTON & BIRD LLP
Bank of America Plaza
101 South Tryon Street, Suite 4000
Charlotte, NC 28280-4000
Tel Charlotte Office (704) 444-1000
Fax Charlotte Office (704) 444-1111

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